



VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY 2025 – 2030

Our Vision for Volunteering in Sefton





Volunteering is when someone spends unpaid time doing something to benefit others

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Our Vision

for Volunteering in Sefton

Shaped by the Sector and Sefton

To make Sefton...

a place where volunteering is highly valued, enjoyable, professionally supported and contributes directly to the well-being of the community.

Core Principles

We uphold 5 core principles that guide how volunteering should be carried out within the borough:



Choice

Volunteering is a choice made freely by each individual.



Diversity

Volunteering should be open to all, supporting and meeting the requirements under the Equality Act 2010.



Mutual Benefit

Volunteers and their host organisations will both benefit from the contribution.



Recognition and Value

Volunteers are recognised for their contribution to the community and are highly valued.



Not for Profit

Support is offered to not-for-profit organisations / groups.



Five Core Functions of a Volunteer Centre



Volunteer Centre Sefton was awarded the VCQA (Volunteer Centre Quality Award) which covers the Five Functions of Volunteering which VCS implements throughout our work:



Through the activity of the Volunteer Centre or partnership and its engagement with local networks and decision makers, there is a positive environment in which volunteering is flourishing.



Through the activity of the Volunteer Centre or partnership organisations from all sectors should improve or attain positive consistency in their volunteering programmes.



Through the Volunteer Centre's or partnership's activities the general public and all sectors are better informed about and have access to an effective and efficient brokerage service.



The activity of the Centre or partnership must increase and improve the quantity, quality, and diversity of volunteering locally.



Through the Volunteer Centre's or partnership's activities there is an increased awareness of the issues impacting on volunteering



Where We Are Now with Volunteering in Sefton

Volunteering is instrumental in shaping Sefton’s communities, continuing to play a vital role in the borough we see today.



Engagement with the borough

Social media



MailChimp



Open rate: 36.5%



Click rate: 2.2%



Open rate: 32.4%



Click rate: 6.4%

What We Found

What our organisations and residents told us

Motivations for volunteering

70%

believe their role improves their mental health and wellbeing a lot

75%

got involved to give back to their local community of Sefton

82%

reported volunteering makes them feel less isolated either 'A little' or 'A lot'

58%

felt that volunteering helped them to feel more connected to their local communities

Ambitions for the future of volunteering

24%

of volunteers would like more variety in their role.

17%

of organisations would like VCS to offer more generic training for volunteering

29%

of current volunteers think their volunteering could be improved

53%

of volunteers believe flexible opportunities would encourage increased involvement

Overcoming barriers to volunteering

Organisations think the top barriers to volunteering are:

63%

of organisations find recruiting the most difficult aspect of engaging volunteers

69%

of volunteers reluctant to make an ongoing commitment

64%

Caring responsibilities

19%

flexibility requirements

Delivering Our Vision

Volunteer Centre Sefton Objectives 2025–2030

To continue to develop the five functions of a volunteer centre, VCS will focus on five key objectives. By focusing on these areas, VCS aims to enhance the volunteering experience, addressing both the needs of organisations seeking volunteers and individuals looking for flexible and meaningful ways to contribute.



1. Increase the Number of People Volunteering by Improving the Volunteering Offer Across the Borough



2. Champion Equality and Diversity in Volunteering



3. Promote the Recognition and Celebration of Volunteers



4. Campaign on Issues Affecting Volunteering



5. Encourage Public and Private Sector Involvement



1. Increase the Number of People Volunteering by Improving the Volunteering Offer Across the Borough



Volunteer Centre Sefton would like to see better volunteer satisfaction (in the VCS survey, 29% of volunteers wanted their experience to be improved) with even more volunteers feeling like they are making a difference to, and connected to their community through their volunteering over the next 5 years.

Measured by:

- Data on Civi and Team Kinetic
- Case studies
- Feedback from volunteers and organisations
- Engagement: social media and website views

Our aims:

- Encourage organisations to provide robust training and support systems to ensure volunteers feel prepared and valued in their roles
- Collaborate with organisations to expand the range of volunteer opportunities with varying levels of commitment and flexible scheduling to accommodate diverse lifestyles and preferences
- Share and advocate for best practices within the sector to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and satisfaction of volunteer programs
- Engage organisations to remove barriers to volunteering such as paying out of pocket expenses to make volunteering more accessible to everyone, particularly younger volunteers
- Promote the adoption of micro volunteering, taster sessions and one off roles to enhance inclusivity and continuation of volunteer roles
- Strengthen partnerships with local organisations to create more volunteering opportunities and increase community involvement
- Employ recruitment Initiatives: Enhancing strategies to attract new volunteers by promoting the benefits and impact of volunteering, and creating appealing recruitment campaigns
- Provide training, resources, tool kits and support to encourage best practice for volunteer involving organisations to improve motivation and retention of volunteers

2. Champion Equality and Diversity in Volunteering



Volunteering is not equally accessible and volunteers from different parts of our community have varying experiences. We want to make volunteering easier to access to all.

A key priority which emerged from our survey and a Time Well Spent was including younger volunteers. We want to promote volunteering to children and young people with the goal for volunteering to become a life long habit.

Measured by:

- Data on Civi and Team Kinetic
- Feedback from volunteers and organisations
- Surveys

Our aims:

- Support volunteers from lower socio economic backgrounds and areas of deprivation to successfully take up volunteering opportunities that are meaningful to them
- Provide materials in various formats including easy read and collaborate with experts by experience and expert organisations to ensure that we hit the mark
- Work with organisations across all sectors to provide one off volunteering sessions to encourage participation and more regular volunteering
- Collaborate with schools, colleges and universities to encourage participation
- Support organisations to create age appropriate roles specifically designed for young people
- Encourage family volunteering initiatives
- Utilise social media platforms and digital channels to reach and engage young people, sharing success stories and promoting volunteer opportunities
- Ensure that the voices of young volunteers are heard and considered in the development of initiatives

3. Promote the Recognition and Celebration of Volunteers



Volunteering should be championed, valued and recognised for its importance in society across the borough .

Measured by:

- Number of volunteer certificates
- Attendees at event
- Case studies
- Feedback from volunteers and organisations

Our aims:

- > Continue to promote our free volunteer certificate scheme , recording volunteering hours and the socio economic impact to Sefton
- > Encourage organisations to acknowledge volunteer contributions and long term engagement
- > Hold our annual Volunteer Celebration Event during Volunteers’ Week to recognise volunteering across the borough
- > Encourage organisations to show their appreciation to their volunteers, regularly thanking them for their dedication and support
- > Utilise social media with photo and video content to engage harder to reach groups such as younger volunteers to celebrate existing volunteers in Sefton and tell their story, encouraging others to get involved

4. Campaign on Issues Affecting Volunteering



Volunteer Centre Sefton envisions a collaborative approach to volunteering across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) where partnerships across sectors work together to amplify reach and effectiveness of volunteer programmes.

We would like to see increased investment to sustain and expand volunteer projects, building on sustainable models and prioritising volunteering. We want all volunteers to have access to expenses and to be treated fairly and respected.

Measured by:

- Feedback from and consultation with volunteers and organisations
- Change in policy
- Partnership working

Our aims:

- > VCS will aim to 'shout louder' about campaigning on issues affecting volunteering for organisations and volunteers to feel involved in making an impact locally and nationally
- > Raise awareness and address key challenges affecting volunteering to encourage greater participation and create more impactful opportunities for communities
- > Reduce barriers to volunteering by influencing key decision makers
- > Advocate for sufficient funding opportunities for volunteer involving organisations to provide a robust volunteer management programme
- > Request and listen to feedback from individuals and organisations about issues affecting them the most
- > Continue to strengthen partnerships across the LCR to provide the best support for volunteering across the whole Merseyside and Halton areas.

5. Encourage Public and Private Sector Involvement



Volunteer Centre Sefton would like to see better access to skilled professionals for the VCF sector and improved partnership working across sectors for mutual benefit. We want to encourage organisations to introduce volunteering to their employees, potentially leading to increased interest in volunteering long term whilst supporting local VCF organisations and groups in the meantime; many of which are run solely by volunteers and struggle to find the resources and time to invest into larger scale projects (such as repainting a community centre).

Measured by:

- Data on Civi and Team Kinetic
- Case studies
- Feedback from volunteers and organisations
- Engagement: social media and website views

Our aims:

- Strengthen relationships with public and private sector organisations
- Promote the benefits of Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) and encourage paid time off to volunteer
- Provide opportunities for ESV days that are meaningful and beneficial for the VCF sector organisation or group hosting the session
- Facilitate the communication between corporate / public sector organisations and the VCF sector, acting as a brokerage service and providing support in the run up and on the day
- Extend opportunities for both the public and private sectors to enhance their social value and impact through volunteering initiatives.
- Create a 'skills bank' to offer tailored and meaningful support
- Build networking events to encourage the sectors to work together
- Highlight success stories to encourage others to participate

Swot Analysis

for Volunteer Centre Sefton

Strengths

- Excellent relationships with a wide variety of external charitable organisations/ groups
- Good working relationship with sub regional and regional Volunteer Centre networks
- Commitment of Sefton MBC to develop volunteering in the borough
- Long established Volunteer Centre, managed by Sefton CVS
- Well known resource in the local community for organisations: offices in both the North and South of the borough
- Experienced and proactive team
- Good engagement with comms and events e.g. social media, newsletter, forums
- Good relationship with stakeholders e.g. Sefton MBC, Mayor of Sefton's office
- Consistent growth in diversity of projects
- Able to respond to external issues quickly, e.g. arrival of Ukrainian guests
- Implementation of new volunteer management system- Team Kinetic
- Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation

Threats

- Funding- possibility of funding cuts due to cuts to local Council resources
- Reduction of capacity of National infrastructure bodies
- Reduction in capacity of regional or sub regional Volunteer Centres leading to increased demand from regional organisations

Weaknesses

- Short term funding mainly from Sefton MBC
- Less well known to individuals- can be confusion with other bodies such as Sefton MBC
- Increased demand known to individuals- can be confusion with other bodies such as Sefton MBC
- No shop front to provide a presence in the community- combatting this by attending many face to face events/ meetings/ forums etc.
- Small team- reduced capacity to provide intensive one to one support to individuals
- Increased demand on reduced resources

Opportunities

- Invited to attend many promotional events to extend reach
- Opportunity to continue to develop good relationships with public sector organisations such as Southport College, LJMU etc
- Opportunity to continue to develop good relationships with private sector organisations such as Southport BID
- Development of a regional volunteer data management system



Where We Aim to Be

Volunteering in Sefton by 2030

Volunteering is well established in the UK and Sefton. While the strategy in focus concerns formal volunteering, it's essential to recognise that all forms of volunteering—whether informal or formal, structured or unstructured, regular or occasional, group-based or individual—have a valuable impact on the local community.

By 2030 Volunteer Centre Sefton would like to see the Voluntary Community and Faith (VCF) sector working cohesively to improve social infrastructure. We will develop and champion volunteering and empower communities, organisations and individuals to make positive change for the good of the borough and those living within it.

Volunteering will be appropriately resourced and organisations and volunteers supported and recognised for the value they bring to the community.

VCS will maintain our commitment to the five core functions of volunteering, with an emphasis on addressing emerging challenges and identifying gaps within the sector.

We will continue to raise the profile of the Centre in order to reach more individuals and groups/ organisations who need support around volunteering and amplify the voice of volunteer issues.



Volunteering Strategy 2025 – 2030

The 'Volunteering Strategy 2025–2030: Our Vision for Volunteering in Sefton' report has been compiled by Volunteer Centre Sefton, as part of Sefton Council for Voluntary Service.

volunteeringsefton.org.uk

Find us @VCSefton



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